DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 225 083 CG 016 431

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TITLE Core Curriculum: A Collaborative Approach to Continuing Education for Rural Personnel.
PUB DATE 27 Aug 82
NOTE 19p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (90th, Washington, DC, August 23-27, 1982).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrators; *Continuing Education; *Core Curriculum; Counselor Training; Curriculum Development; Extension Education; Higher Education; *Mental Health Programs; Money Management; Personnel Management; *Professional Development; Program Descriptions; Program Evaluation; *Rural Education
IDENTIFIERS *Mental Health Workers

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the core curriculum, a new concept in continuing educaton by which relevant professional and clinical resources in an urban university can be made accessible to personnel in mental health service provider agencies in rural areas. An outline is presented of three curricula, including: (1) Financial Management; (2) Personnel Management; and (3) Program Evaluation. A detailed description of the development, content, and format of the curriculum on "Basic Skills in the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Youth" is given. Materials are included which illustrate the needs assessment, selection of content, practicum placements, and periodic evaluation. The reciprocal nature of the planning tasks and the educational process are emphasized. (Author/JAC)

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Core Curriculum: A Collaborative Approach to Continuing Education for Rural Personnel

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To be presented at the APA Annual Conference in Washington D.C., August 27, 1982

CG 016431

SUMMARY

Core Curriculum: a collaborative approach to continuing education for rural personnel

Continuing education for rural mental health practitioners is limited by a scarcity of specialized resources, professional expertise and accessible training facilities. Recent budget cuts and staff reductions create additional obstacles by restricting travel funds and time allotted for training. In response to the need for specific types of training opportunities, a constellation of "core curricula" was developed whereby relevant educational resources in an urban university can be made available to selected groups of rural personnel. This paper will present an overview of the "core curriculum" concept and a detailed description of the development, content and format of one curriculum.

Overview

The Core Curriculum is a new concept in continuing education for rural practitioners. It is part of a broad spectrum of educational, consultative and evaluative programs provided to the mental health systems in 23 rural counties in Western Pennsylvania by the staff and faculty of the Office of Education and Regional Programming (OERP) and the Department of Psychiatry, Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic (WPIC), University of Pittsburgh. The trainees are clinicians and administrators from the staffs of rural community mental health clinics. The purpose of the curricula is to provide these trainees with didactic experiences and practical skills that will supplement previous training in their respective areas of specialty. It is intended that these individuals will become the primary resource, both as practitioners and as teachers, in their home

clinic, for their particular areas of specialty. It is also intended that the learning process will be reciprocal, with the faculty gaining an understanding of the problems, issues and appropriate solutions for rural settings.

The collaborative process of planning and developing the Core Curriculum was accomplished through a series of meetings with mental health program administrators, clinic directors and MH/MR Board members. Assessments were made of the clinic staffs' needs for continuing education. Preference for topics, format and time frame were identified. The benefits to be derived from these programs were operationally defined. Participants were selected by their respective mental health clinic directors on the basis of primary service responsibilities, needs, and willingness to participate fully in the program. Formal approval was obtained from the administrator of each participating MH/MR program.

Four curricula were designed to meet the needs of key personnel in every facet of the rural mental health system. Each of the courses has its own objectives, format and content. For the didactic presentations, faculty was assembled from the nucleus of professional expertise in the Department of Psychiatry. Disciplines represented include psychiatry, psychology, social work and nursing as well as public health, epidemiology, economics and business management. Additional educational materials such as extensive library resources and audio visual tapes are also utilized. Following is a brief summary of three Core Curricula. Each of these courses is scheduled to meet for a full day, twice a month for eight sessions.

The Curriculum on "Financial Management of Mental Health Facilities" is aimed at mental health administrators and personnel who wish more formal training in areas of fiscal management and its relation to the

the daily operation of a mental health facility. Using an experimental learning format, the group confronts actual problems in such areas as fiscal planning and reporting, cost accounting, evaluation and auditing. The Curriculum on "Personnel Management in Mental Health Programs" includes topics such as employment practices, labor relations, personnel policies and payroll procedures. The Curriculum on "Program Evaluation" is designed to provide the participants with a conceptual framework for linking planning with evaluation. Sessions are focused on such topics as quality assurance, research strategies, assessment of clinical outcomes, cost-benefit analysis and models of program planning and evaluation.

The contents of each of these Curricula are appended to this paper. The Core Curriculum on "Basic Skills in the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Youth" is described below.

Core Curriculum for Clinicians Working with Children

Participants for this course were selected by the directors of their respective mental health clinics on the basis of their service responsibilities with children and youth. Nine clinicians were chosen, representing eight rural counties. To assist in the planning process, participants completed an initial needs assessment which provided data on their previous education, clinical experience and current work responsibilities. In addition, participants were asked to rate seven areas of clinical knowledge and skills according to the degree of relevance to their present job, proficiency attained and need for additional training. On the basis of these data, content areas were identified and a schedule was developed.

This course consisted of three dimensions. The first was a series of didactic sessions aimed at imparting knowledge of normal and deviant personality development, diagnostic procedures and interviewing techniques

and applying this knowledge to the selection and provision of appropriate therapeutic interventions for children. The second dimension consisted of a series of practicum placements on selected inpatient and outpatient units in the Department of Psychiatry. These placements were intended to familiarize the participants with the respective patient populations, treatment procedures, referral patterns and general administrative policies of these units. The third dimension consisted of presentations, by the participants, of current cases that have posed problems in regard to their diagnosis and/or treatment.

To accomodate to the needs of the rural clinicians and to minimize travel time from the rural areas to the urban University, a flexible schedule was arranged. This course consisted of three segments: full-day sessions once a week for three months in the fall, one day per month during the winter supplemented by interim phone consultations with faculty and full-day sessions once a week for four months in the spring. At the conclusion of each segment, an interim evaluation was obtained from the participants. On the basis of these evaluations, the content and format of the course was continually modified and updated. The content and sequence of this curriculum and the evaluation forms used to assess its effectiveness are appended to this paper.

At the conclusion of the course, an overall evaluation was obtained, using the items from the initial needs assessment. The results of this evaluation are currently being analyzed. They will provide data on the effectiveness of the presentations and the adequacy of coverage for each of the topic areas. On the basis of these data, as well as from discussions with the participants and feed-back from the MH/MR administrators and clinic directors, a revised curriculum will be designed for the coming academic year.

CHILD AND YOUTH CORE CURRICULUM ONE

DATE	TOPIC	FACULTY	ROOM
September 9, 1981	Orientation Meeting	Ellen Benswanger, Ph.D. Theodore Petti, M.D. Janice Forster, M.D. Jerome Fialkov, M.D.	7th fl. Conference Room 736 WPIC
September 16, 1981	Developmental Theories Overview of developmental interview with videotape demonstration	Ellen Benswanger, Ph.D. Jerome Fialkov, M.D.	Room 224 WPIC
September 23, 1981	Family Life Cycle	Ellen Benswanger, Ph.D. Barbara Epke, M.S.W.	7th fl. Conference Room 736 - WPIC
September 30, 1981	Pregnancy, gestation, birth and infancy	Richard Cohen, M.D.	Room 224 WPIC
October 7, 1981	Preschool Child	Mina Kessler, M.D.	7th fl. Conference Room 736 - WPIC
October 14, 1981	Latency	Jerome Fialkov, M.D. Janice Forster, M.D.	Room 224 WPIC
October 21, 1981	Preadolescence/ Early Adolescence	Theodore Petti, M.D.	Room 224 WPIC
October 28, 1981	Adolescence and Young Adulthood	Peter Henderson, M.D. Diane Holder, M.S.W.	Room 224 WPIC
November 4, 1981	Emotional Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence	Theodore Petti, M.D. Janice Forster, M.D.	7th fl. Conference Room 736 WPIC
November 18, 1981	Behavioral Disorders in Childhood and Adolescence	Alan Unis, M.D. Jerome Fialkov, M.D.	Auditorium 2nd floor WPIC
December 2, 1981	Review of First Part of the Course	Ellen Benswanger, Ph.D. Jerome Fialkov, M.D. Janice Forster, M.D. Theodore Petti, M.D.	7th floor Conference Room 736 WPIC

CORE CURRICULUM I - SPRING PROGRAM

CHILD and YOUTH SECTION

March 17th	Dynamic Psychotherapies for Children	Janice Forster, M.D. 9:00 - 12:00
March 24th	Behavioral Assessment and Management of Socially Unskilled Children	Larry Michelson, Ph.D. 9:00 - 12:00
** March 31st	Diagnostic and Therapeutic Uses of Art in the Management of Children	Judith Rubin 9:00 - 12:00
April 7th	Principles of Consultation	T.A. Petti, M.D. 9:00 - 10:30
	Assessment and Counseling of Learning Disabled Children - Part I	Judith Marsh, M. Ed. 10:30 - 12:00
April 14th	Behavioral Consultation to Teachers	Debbie Lambert 9:00 - 10:30
	Behavioral Assessment of Conduct Disorder in Children	Douglas Griest, Ph.D. 10:30 - 12:00
April 21st	School Refusal	Esther Marine, Ph.D. 9:00 - 11:00
	Assessment and Counseling of Learning Disabled Children - Part II	Judith Marsh, M. Ed. 11:00 - 12:00
April 28th	Differential Diagnosis and Treatment Planning for the Disturbed Mentally Retarded Child	Ed Nuffield, M.D. 9:00 - 11:00
	Pharmacologic Considerations in the Management of Disturbed Mentally Retarded Children	Steve Breuning, M.D. 11:00 - 12:00
May 5th	A Practical Approach to School Consultation	Vivian Harway, Ph.D. 9:00 - 10:30
	Parent Skills Training	Douglas Griest, Ph.D. 10:30 - 12:00
May 12th	Prevention and Education for the Vulnerable - the parent-child dyad	E. Elmer 10:00 - 12:00
May 19th	Sexual molestation and abuse: Diagnosis, management and indications for therapy	Rich Wheland, M.S.W. 9:00 - 12:00

May 26th	Assessment and Diagnosis of Adolescent Psychiatric Disorders (illustrated with a clinical case presentation)	Margaret Cashman, M.D. 9:00 - 10:30
	Evaluation of the Family of the Adolescent	Elaine Portner, Ph.D. 10:30 - 12:00
June 2nd	Family Diagnostic Interviews	Family Therapy Faculty 9:00 - 12:00
June 9th	The Family Therapeutic Approach to Management of the Mentally Ill	Family Therapy Faculty 9:00 - 10:30
	Brief Family Therapy	10:30 - 12:00
June 16th	Substance Abuse in Adolescents	Margaret Cashman, M.D. 9:00 - 10:30
	Eating Disorders	George Hsu, M.D. 10:30 - 12:00
June 23rd	Group Therapeutic Techniques with Adolescents	Eleanor Irwin, Ph.D. 9:00 - 12:00
June 30th	Clinical Signs of Mother-Infant Systems in Distress	Elsie Broussard, M.D. 9:00 - 10:30
	Consultation to Community Agencies and Management of Burnout	Joan Kyes, M.S.N. 10:30 - 12:00
July 7th	Juvenile Justice, Delinquency and the Community	M. J. Fialkov, M.D. 9:00 - 12:00
July 14th	Psychosomatic Families	Family Therapy Faculty 9:00 - 12:00
July 21st	Pharmacotherapy of Children for the Nonphysician	Ted Petti, M.D. 9:00 - 12:00
July 28th	Feedback and Farewell but NOT Necessarily GOOD-BYE !!	OERP Faculty 9:00 - 12:00

University of Pittsburgh

WESTERN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTE AND CLINIC
Office of Education and Regional Programming

OERP CHILD AND YOUTH CORE CURRICULUM I

Placement of Students for Clinical Rotation

March 24th	Skowronek	Communications Disorder Clinic - Children's Hospital
thru	Anderson	Communications Disorder Clinic - Children's Hospital
May 12th	Fenstermacher-Ross	Adolescent/Young Adult Module
	Hines	Adolescent/Young Adult Module
	Ryen	John Merck Program
	Magnelli	John Merck Program
	Sikorsky	Communications Disorders

		CONSULTANT	PRESENTER
April 21st	Case Consultation 1-2:30 P.M.	Janice Forster, M.D.	Pat Sikorsky
May 19th	Case Consultation 1-2:30 P.M.	Alan Unis, M.D.	Alan Ryen
May 26th	Case Consultation (to be presented as part of 9-10:30 lecture)	Margaret Cashman, M.D.	Nancy Fenstermacher-Ross

May 26th	Skowronek	Children's Psychiatric Treatment Service
thru	Anderson	Children's Psychiatric Treatment Service
July 28th	Fenstermacher-Ross	John Merck Program
	Hines	John Merck Program
	Magnelli	Adolescent /Young Adult Module
	Sikorsky	Communication Disorder Clinic
	Ryen	Adolescent/Young Adult Module

From mid-May all participants will have the opportunity to observe comprehensive evaluation through the Children's modules at WPIC. Further information will be made available in due course.

MJF/ks

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EVALUATION FOR CORE CURRICULUM (Child & Youth)

	CAPTIONS USED FOR Initial Needs Assessment	Relevance to Present Job	Previous experience and/or proficiency in this area	Need for additional Training in this area
	CAPTIONS USED FOR Year-End Evaluation	Relevance to present job	Sufficiency of time given to this topic in CCI	Effectiveness of Presentation of this topic in CCI
		low 1 2 3 high	low 1 2 3 high	low 1 2 3 high
I	Basic Concepts of Normal Development			
	a. Infancy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	b. Early Childhood	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	c. School age	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	d. Adolescence	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	e. Family Life Cycle	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
II	Basic Concepts of Abnormal Development			
	a. Infancy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	b. Early Childhood	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	c. School age	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	d. Adolescence	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	e. Family Life Cycle	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
III	Diagnostic Procedures			
	a. Developmental Interview	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	b. DSM III	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	Other (Specify) _____			
	_____	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
IV	Behavior/Personality Disorders of Childhood and Adolescence			
	a. Conduct Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	b. Attention Deficit Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
	c. Juvenile Delinquency	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3

EVALUATION
Page 2

INITIAL
YEAR-END

	Relevance to Present Job Relevance to present job low high	Previous experience and/or proficiency in this area Sufficiency of time given to this topic in CCI low high	Need for additional Training in this area Effectiveness of Presentation of this topic in CCI low high
	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
d. Anxiety Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
e. Pervasive Developmental Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
f. Sleep Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
g. Eating Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
h. Speech/Language Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
i. Enuresis/Encopresis	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
j. Depression	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
k. Tics and Obsessive Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
l. School-related Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
m. Seizure Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
n. Physical Disorders or Conditions	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
o. Psychosexual Disorders	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
p. Psychiatric Conditions	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
q. Other (Specify)_____			
_____	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
V Therapeutic Techniques			
a. Individual Psychotherapy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
b. Group Psychotherapy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
c. Play Therapy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
d. Family Therapy	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
e. Behavior Therapies	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
f. Other (Specify) _____			
_____	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3

EVALUATION
Page 3

INITIAL
YEAR-END

	Relevance to Present Job	Previous experience and/or proficiency in this area	Need for additional Training in this area
	Relevance to Present job	Sufficiency of time given to this topic in CCI	Effectiveness of presentation of this topic in CCI
	low 1 2 3 high	low 1 2 3 high	low 1 2 3 high
VI Family Issues			
a. Effects of illness, hospitalization, death	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
b. Separation, divorce	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
c. Disturbed or retarded family members	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
d. Low-income, disorganized families	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
e. Foster, adoptive families	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
f. Drug/Alcohol Abuse	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
g. Child Abuse	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
h. Other (Specify) _____			
_____	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
VII Specific Professional Issues			
a. Utilizing Medical Reports	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
b. Utilizing Neurological Reports	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
c. Utilizing Psychological Reports	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
d. Utilizing Educational Reports	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
e. Consultation with schools	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
f. Consultation with Community Agencies	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
g. Psychopharmacology	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
h. Self-assessment	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3
i. Other (Specify) _____			
_____	1 2 3	1 2 3	1 2 3

Course Outline:

Financial Management of Mental Health Facilities and Programs

Session I	Translating goals and objectives into financial terms; development of a budget
Session II	Financial reports
Session III	Mental Health financial reporting forms and their uses
Session IV	Cost accounting; cost allocation methods
Session V	Program evaluation from a financial perspective
Session IV	Preparation and interpretation of audit reports
Session VII	The MH/MR financial system: problems and solutions

Course Outline:

Personnel Management in Mental Health Programs

Session I	Recruiting, selection, hiring, placement
	Regulatory and statutory provisions
	Promotions and transfers
	Orientation of new employees
	Probationary period
	Miscellaneous issues (temporary employment, employment of relatives, aliens)
Session II	Salary Administration
	Job descriptions
	Job evaluation
	Salary determinants
	Fair Labor Standards Act
	Pay policies
Session III	Benefits
Session IV	Employee Relations
Session V	Communications
	Employee handbood
	Policies and procedures
	Employee publications
Session VI	Labor relations
	Regulatory and statutory provisions
	Negotiating and administering a union contract
	Strikes and lockouts
	Management's rights and responsibilities
Session VII	Personnel records and reports
	Personnel information systems
	Federal requirements
	Employee confidentiality
	Economic data

Course Outline:

Program Evaluation

Session I	Specification of nature of problems to be addressed, survey methods, needs assessments.
Session II	Program objectives, anticipated populations, intervention designs. Discussion of problems and current practices.
Session III	Monitoring strategies, special studies of particular diversions, collection and application of utilization data.
Session IV	The relationship of program monitoring to quality assurance; applications of evaluative information to program management.
Session V	Overview of program outcome studies; review of standardized measures.
Session VI	Review of cost-benefit measurement strategies and their application to patient care audits; developing an outcome evaluation strategy.
Session VII	Evaluating impact on the community, relationship of mental health to other services; discussion of impact studies in progress.
Session VIII	Strategies and problems in evaluating Consultation and Education services, administrative support services; summary of issues, problems and potential benefits.